



MERCHANT TAYLORS'

Prep

CURRICULUM POLICY

Introduction

Merchant Taylors' Prep's Curriculum Policy applies to the EYFS (including wrap-around care), the Pre-Prep section and the Prep section. It should be read in conjunction with the Teaching and Learning Policy, Feedback Policy and SMSC Policy.

Merchant Taylors' Prep maintains a broad academic tradition that supports pupils' personal wellbeing and preparation for the next stage of education. We aim to enable each pupil to realise his potential through a full-time, supervised educational experience that includes linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative learning. Provision is delivered through age-appropriate subject matter matched to the pupils' aptitudes, including those with SEND.

Through this curriculum, we aim to ensure that all pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills, enabling them to contribute fully to community life as responsible, compassionate and well-balanced citizens.

Merchant Taylors' Prep also provides a rich programme of co-curricular and sporting opportunities which builds confidence, engagement and positive attitudes towards learning.

Our Aims

- To ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress, and to promote a love of learning and foster intellectual curiosity.
- To draw from the core requirements of the National Curriculum (as a minimum), offering breadth, balance and relevance, and allowing flexibility for individual talents and aptitudes.
- To promote the pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, physical, aesthetic and practical development, enabling them to distinguish right from wrong, to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and develop self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence.
- To prepare pupils to contribute as responsible citizens in British society, providing opportunities, responsibilities and experiences relevant to adult life, including a broad, general knowledge of public institutions and services in the United Kingdom. The School actively promotes respect for fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- To prepare pupils for the next stage of their schooling.
- To promote independent learning skills and encourage responsibility for them.
- To promote respect both for their own achievements and for those of others. We encourage pupils to appreciate and respect their own culture and beliefs, and those of others, in a way that promotes tolerance and harmony between different cultural and religious traditions.

- To build self-confidence in our pupils, which will enable them to take full advantage of the opportunities they meet at the School and beyond.
- To develop the key skills of communication, numeracy, literacy and ICT.
- To nurture spiritual and moral values, which reflect our aims and ethos through all activities, particularly assemblies and in the courtesy and respect evident in relationships across the School.
- To provide subject material appropriate to pupils' ages and aptitudes, including those with SEND or EHC Plans, and to review Schemes of Learning regularly to ensure they continue to meet the needs of all pupils.
- To develop lively, enquiring minds through well-planned lessons that provide stimulating, challenging and purposeful learning experiences, extended and enhanced by a range of homework tasks.
- To monitor, evaluate and act upon the quality of the planning, delivery and consistency of curriculum provision through Assessment for Learning, recording and review procedures.
- To extend pupils' learning experiences through House events, day and residential visits, co-curricular activities and charitable fund-raising.
- To celebrate pupils' achievements and success through School activities, performances, displays and individual commendation.

Curriculum Overview

Merchant Taylors' Prep maintains a strong academic tradition and sets high expectations for academic achievement, balancing this with pupils' broader personal development and wellbeing. High quality teaching and learning is supported by a broad range of co-curricular and sporting activities which enrich pupils' experience.

The curriculum develops pupils' knowledge, skills and talents, encouraging them to become reflective, independent and effective problem-solvers. It encompasses all National Curriculum subjects and is enriched at each stage of learning. Schemes of Learning identify content, skills and knowledge introduced progressively across year groups.

A strong emphasis is placed on core subjects (English, Mathematics and Science), complemented by Modern Foreign Languages (primarily French), History, Geography and Classics (including Latin and Greek).

Art & Design Technology, Computing, Drama, Music and Physical Education & Sport are integral components of the curriculum. TPRE (Theology, Philosophy, Religion & Ethics) & Religious Studies inform pupils about different beliefs and provide cultural and contextual understanding. Digital Literacy and ICT skills are an integral part of all learning; in particular they are used to present work, research information and organise and display data across the curriculum.

The curriculum ensures coherence across key stages and encourages high achievement. Curriculum planning is informed by assessment and monitoring of pupils' needs.

The School emphasises equality of access. Pupils are presented with the same knowledge and skills for each subject, but at levels and in ways appropriate to their needs. Work is adapted to the different needs and abilities of the pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties receive specialist support, while more able pupils extend their learning through enrichment.

Co-curricular activities are central to pupils' development and enjoyment. The School offers a wide range of clubs and activities across all sections, and pupils are encouraged to broaden their interests by participating in chosen activities.

Heads of Department oversee subject content, progression and assessment across the School. The following sections outline how the curriculum is delivered through the EYFS, Pre-Prep and Prep Departments, supported by specialist teaching, targeted intervention, enrichment and structured assessment, enabling pupils to move smoothly to the next stage of learning.

Learning Skills

Across the School, the curriculum is designed not only to develop knowledge and subject understanding, but also to nurture key learning skills which underpin successful learning in every subject and at every stage.

These learning skills include:

- Concentration
- Perseverance
- Empathy
- Communication
- Collaboration
- Independence
- Compassion
- Curiosity
- Creativity
- Risk-taking

These habits for learning are first developed explicitly within the Early Years environment and are continually strengthened as pupils move through the Pre-Prep and Prep Departments.

Pre-Prep Department

The Pre-Prep Department encompasses EYFS (Nursery and Reception) and Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2). Teaching and learning are carefully structured to ensure a smooth transition from continuous provision into the more formal requirements of the School's curriculum and, subsequently, the Prep Department.

EYFS (Nursery and Reception)

Learning in EYFS is guided by the EYFS Statutory Framework and informed by the Birth to 5 Matters non-statutory guidance. The curriculum supports development across the Prime Areas (communication and language, physical development, and personal, social and emotional development) and the Specific Areas (literacy, mathematics, understanding the world, and expressive arts and design).

Teaching balances adult-led and child-initiated learning, enabling pupils to develop independence, resilience and enthusiasm for learning. In EYFS, particular emphasis is placed on developing the learning skills outlined above through this balance of provision. Assessment is made against Birth to 5 Matters, and this is used to inform planning, monitor progress and provide targeted support where needed.

Staff work closely with parents and carers to support wellbeing, early development and a confident transition into Key Stage 1.

Further information can be found in the EYFS policy.

Key Stage 1: Years 1 and 2

In Key Stage 1 pupils follow programmes of study broadly aligned with the National Curriculum with an increasing emphasis on spoken language, reading, writing and mathematics. Subjects are taught both discretely and through integrated thematic learning, enabling pupils to make connections across areas of study.

Phonics is taught through a systematic synthetic phonics programme, supporting early reading and spelling. Mathematics develops number sense, reasoning and problem-solving. Science encourages observation, questioning and exploration. Foundation subjects introduce key knowledge and skills in computing, history, geography, art and design, music, physical education, religious studies and PSHE.

Teaching in Years 1 and 2 continues to develop the learning skills first established in the Early Years to prepare pupils for the transition into the Prep Department. Assessment is used to inform planning, identify support needs and extend pupils who demonstrate advanced understanding.

Prep Department

The Prep Department encompasses Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6) and currently Year 8 (Key Stage 3) until July 2026. It builds directly on the foundations established in the Pre-Prep Department. Teaching and learning are structured to develop increasing independence, academic confidence and depth of understanding as pupils progress through the School.

Key Stage 2 and 3: Years 3 to 8

In Key Stage 2 and 3, pupils study English, Mathematics and Science as core subjects, complemented by Modern Foreign Languages (primarily French), History, Geography and Classics (including Latin and Greek).

Art & Design Technology, Computing, Drama, Music and Physical Education & Sport remain important components of the Curriculum. TPRE (Theology, Philosophy, Religion & Ethics) & Religious Studies continue to provide pupils with opportunities to explore different beliefs and to develop cultural and contextual understanding. The pupils also learn Wellbeing & PSHE, aiming to ensure that they are confident and well-rounded.

Teaching in Key Stage 2 continues to develop the Learning Skills established in Pre-Prep, supporting pupils to become increasingly reflective, independent and resilient learners.

Digital Literacy skills are used across subjects to support research, presentation of work and the organisation of information.

Curriculum Delivery in Key Stage 2 and 3:

Subjects are taught by a mixture of form teachers and specialist teachers in lower Key Stage 2, enabling pupils to experience both continuity and subject expertise. From Year 5, students are taught exclusively by specialist teachers. Schemes of Learning ensure progression in content, skills and knowledge across all year groups.

Assessment is used to inform planning, identify pupils requiring additional support and to extend those who demonstrate advanced understanding.

As pupils move through Years 5, 6 and 8, increasing opportunities are provided for independent learning, preparation for senior school expectations and the development of strong study habits.

The school maintains strong links with senior independent and maintained schools, supporting pupils and families with transition and destination choices. Individualised learning opportunities are provided for Year 6 and Year 8 pupils to prepare them for the next phase of their education.

Wellbeing & PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education)

Wellbeing and Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education form an important part of the School's curriculum and contribute significantly to pupils' personal development and readiness for learning.

Through PSHE, pupils develop an understanding of relationships, health, responsibility, citizenship and personal safety. This supports the development of the learning skills described earlier in the policy, particularly empathy, communication, collaboration and independence.

PSHE is delivered through dedicated lessons, assemblies, themed events and day-to-day pastoral interactions. The programme is structured to be age-appropriate and responsive to pupils' needs as they progress through the School.

Pupils are taught about the importance of mutual respect, tolerance, democracy, the rule of law and individual liberty, ensuring that fundamental British values are actively promoted within the curriculum. Opportunities for discussion, reflection and respectful debate allow pupils to explore social, moral and cultural issues in a safe and supportive environment.

The School works in partnership with parents to support pupils' wellbeing and personal development.

Further information can be found in the PSHE policy.

Visits and Outings: The Enrichment Curriculum

Educational visits form an important part of the curriculum and provide pupils with first-hand experiences that enrich classroom learning and support deeper understanding across subjects.

Visits are planned to complement areas of study and to promote pupils' curiosity, independence and confidence, reinforcing the learning skills developed throughout the School.

Pupils participate in a range of local visits, day trips and residential experiences appropriate to their age. These opportunities support social development, collaboration and resilience, as well as subject-specific learning.

All visits are carefully planned and conducted in line with current regulations to ensure pupils' safety and wellbeing.

Homework

Homework is an extension of classroom learning and plays an important role in developing pupils' independence, organisation and responsibility for their own learning.

Tasks are designed to reinforce, extend or prepare learning undertaken in class, and to provide opportunities for pupils to practise key skills in reading, writing, mathematics and research. Homework also supports the development of the learning skills outlined earlier in this policy, particularly perseverance, independence and concentration.

The amount and nature of homework increases gradually as pupils move through the School, preparing them for the expectations of the Prep Department and, later, senior school.

Homework is set in an age-appropriate way and is intended to be manageable and purposeful.

Further information can be found in the Homework Policy.

Inclusion and Access

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

The School is committed to providing an inclusive curriculum that enables all pupils to access learning and make progress according to their individual needs. It regularly reviews the progress of pupils receiving support to ensure that provision remains effective and responsive to their needs.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported through early identification, targeted intervention and appropriate classroom strategies. Provision is informed by assessment, professional advice where necessary, and close collaboration between teaching staff, the Learning Support Department and parents.

Teaching is adapted to ensure pupils with SEND can access the same curriculum as their peers, with appropriate support, differentiation and reasonable adjustments. This enables pupils to develop confidence, independence and the learning skills required for successful learning.

Where pupils have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan), provision is made in accordance with the recommendations set out within it.

Further information can be found in the SEND Policy.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Pupils for whom English is an additional language are supported to access the curriculum through appropriate classroom strategies, targeted support where necessary and careful monitoring of progress. Teaching ensures that language development does not become a barrier to learning, while also recognising and valuing pupils' linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

Children Performing Highly

The School recognises that some pupils demonstrate particularly strong attainment, curiosity and depth of understanding in one or more areas of the curriculum.

Teaching is planned to provide appropriate challenge, extension and opportunities for deeper thinking, ensuring that these pupils continue to make strong progress. This includes differentiated tasks, open-ended questioning, enrichment opportunities and, where appropriate, participation in clubs, competitions and scholarship preparation.

Pupils performing highly are encouraged to develop the learning skills of independence, perseverance, creativity and intellectual curiosity, enabling them to take increasing ownership of their learning. Staff monitor the progress of these pupils carefully to ensure that challenge remains appropriate and that they continue to be stretched academically.

Further information can be found in the Children Performing Highly Policy.

Equal Opportunities

The School is committed to providing equal access to the curriculum for all pupils, regardless of background, ability or need.

Teaching and curriculum provision are planned to ensure that all pupils are able to participate fully in learning and school life. Differences in ability, background and experience are recognised and accommodated through appropriate adaptation of teaching and learning.

The school promotes respect, inclusion and fairness across all aspects of its work.

Further information can be found in the Equal Opportunities Policy.

Assessment, Feedback and Reporting

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning at Merchant Taylors' Prep and is used to inform planning, monitor progress and support pupils' next steps in learning.

Teachers assess pupils regularly through a combination of formative, diagnostic and summative assessment.

Formative assessment takes place through observation, discussion, questioning and the review of pupils' work. This allows teachers to adapt teaching to meet pupils' needs and to provide timely feedback.

Diagnostic assessment identifies individual strengths and areas for development. This includes the use of standardised assessments such as CAT 4 baseline assessments, reading tests and Progress Tests.

Summative assessment recognises what a pupil can do at a particular point in time. This includes EYFS baseline assessment, subject- specific unit assessments, and school wide internal examinations in Year 5 and 6.

Assessment information is used to inform curriculum provision, identify pupils requiring additional support or challenge, and ensure that all pupils continue to make appropriate progress.

Further information can be found in the Assessment Policy.

Professional oversight

Staff Development

The quality of the curriculum is supported by ongoing professional development for staff. Teachers are encouraged to remain up to date with developments in subject knowledge, pedagogy and curriculum design.

Opportunities for training, collaboration and reflection enable staff to continually refine their practice, ensuring that pupils benefit from high-quality teaching across the School.

Political Views

Senior leaders monitor curriculum content to ensure that no indoctrination of political ideology exists in any studies, and that pupils are presented with balanced views where political issues are discussed.

Teaching encourages respectful discussion and critical thinking, allowing pupils to explore social, moral and cultural issues in an age-appropriate way

Further information can be found in the SMSC Policy

Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed regularly by Senior Leaders to ensure that it continues to reflect current practice and remains in line with regulatory expectations.

Policy reviewed by LW: January 2026
Next review date: January 2027